



FEMA Grant Helps Town Rebuild Road, Improve Safety for Residents

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

Hancock County, Maine

Hancock County, ME - The coast of Maine is subjected to vicious winter storms that produce a witch's brew of rain, snow, and ice along with high winds. Along the coast of Maine, there are many small villages that date back to the 1600s. One of them is the Town of Surry, located on the shores of Penobscot Bay. An old fishing village backed by steep hills, the area is a submersed mountain range that includes Cadillac Mountain, the highest point along the East Coast.



Thatcher Hill is one of many steep roads in Surry that was never properly constructed. It is an old logging road that runs straight up the hill. To make matters worse, the road sits on a ledge, making it impossible to install a ditch line. Without a proper ditch line, a road is prone to water damage. Hence, repairs to this road had been never ending, averaging four times per year. The problem of Thatcher Road closures has had a ripple effect on neighbors, schools, businesses, and municipal and utility services. This road affects almost half of the housing units in town (262 out of 551 year round dwellings) and 22 percent of the town's population (306 out of 1,361).

After much town input, the Town of Surry decided that the only viable solution was to remove the ledge, improve the drainage and ditches, and resurface the road. The plan of action was for the town to apply for a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grant. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) HMGP provides grants to state, Indian tribes, and local governments for long-term hazard mitigation projects following a major disaster declaration. Under the HMGP program, FEMA pays up to 75 percent of the project cost, while either the state or the applicant covers the remaining 25 percent. The grant was applied for in August 2005 (under DR 1591-ME) for the improvement of drainage on the Thatch Hill Road.

On June 5, 2007, the HMGP grant was approved and work began. The Thatcher Hill Road project set out to improve safety by controlling the erosion and eliminating water flow onto the road, preventing ice build-up in the winter. The work consisted of removing brush, blasting the ledge, excavation of a ditch line, armoring the ditches, and installing six driveway culverts and four cross culverts. The entire project area then received a shim coat to provide the proper top protection to the road.

The project took a little over two months and was completed on July 13, 2007. The total cost of the project was \$146,762. The town of Surry paid the total local share of \$36,690.

As of February, 2009, Surry town officials report confirm that the road has not suffered the repeated cycle of damage. Now the citizens have a safe and reliable means of traveling to and from their homes.

Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County in a State**

FEMA Region: **Region I**

State: **Maine**

County: **Hancock County**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**
Hazard Type: **Flooding**
Activity/Project Type: **Flood Control**
Activity/Project Start Date: **06/2007**
Activity/Project End Date: **07/2007**
Funding Source: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**
Application/Project Number: **DR-1591-ME**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **\$152,840.00 (Actual)**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal
Disaster? **Yes**
Federal Disaster #: **1591 , 06/29/2005**
Federal Disaster Year: **2005**
Value Tested By Disaster? **No**
Repetitive Loss Property? **Yes**

Reference URLs

No URLs were submitted

Main Points

No Main Points were entered.